

Europäisches Patentamt  
European Patent Office  
Office européen des brevets



(11) EP 0 856 994 A2

(12) EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(43) Date of publication:  
05.08.1998 Bulletin 1998/32

(51) Int. Cl.<sup>5</sup>: H04N 7/16, H04N 7/173

(21) Application number: 98105670.8

(22) Date of filing: 02.12.1993

(84) Designated Contracting States:  
AT BE CH DE DK ES FR GB GR IE IT LI NL PT SE

(30) Priority: 09.12.1992 US 991074

(62) Document number(s) of the earlier application(s) in  
accordance with Art. 76 EPC:  
94903359.1 / 0 673 578

(71) Applicant:  
DISCOVERY COMMUNICATIONS, INC.  
Bethesda, MD 20814-3522 (US)

(72) Inventors:  
• Hendricks, John S.  
Potomac, MD 20854 (US)

• Bonner, Alfred E.  
Bethesda, MD 20817 (US)  
• Lappington, John P.  
Lawrenceville, GA 30244 (US)  
• Wunderlich, Richard E.  
Alpharetta, GA 30201 (US)

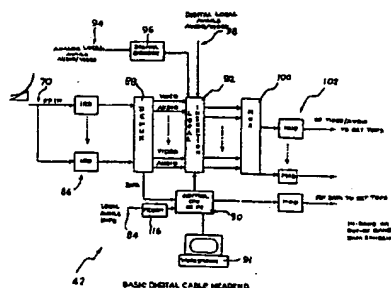
(74) Representative:  
Strehl Schöbel-Hopf & Partner  
Maximilianstrasse 54  
80538 München (DE)

Remarks:

This application was filed on 27 - 03 - 1998 as a  
divisional application to the application mentioned  
under INID code 62.

(54) Digital cable headend for cable television delivery system

(57) An apparatus for use in a cable headend, wherein a first set of signal processing equipment comprising means for receiving program signals for processing; and means for processing the program signals into a first processed signal, wherein the processing involves assigning a priority level to the program signals to be distributed to a plurality of set top terminals; a second set of signal processing equipment comprising means for receiving program signals with digitised programs; and means for processing the digitised programs into a second processed signal, wherein the processing involves assigning a priority level to the program signals to be distributed to the plurality of set top terminals; means connected to the first set of signal processing equipment and the second set of signal processing equipment for adding the first processed signal to the second processed signal to produce an added signal containing more programs than either processed signal; and means for distributing the added signal to the plurality of set top terminals.



EP 0 856 994 A2